

2004 Motorized Carriage Rule Change

During the closed fire season of 2003, skyline logging operations using motorized carriages were kept from working on 66 days due to high fire danger during Level III partial shutdowns. This restriction meant that production was lost in at least some part of the state for 36 percent of the operating season.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), in collaboration with the Washington Forest Protection Association (WFPA) and the Washington Contract Loggers Association (WCLA), wants you to know about a recent change to the IFPL rules regarding the operation of motorized carriages on Level III days. The rule change will allow companies to do more work while continuing to operate safely in the woods.

Manufacturers are now using updated technology that makes motorized carriages more fire safe and more efficient than ever before. Safety is improved because of spark arrestors and other fire prevention features that have been added to these new, motorized carriages.

Beginning July 9, 2004, DNR will allow the use of approved motorized carriages on skyline logging systems when industrial fire precaution levels reach a Level III partial shutdown on state and private forestlands protected by DNR. An “approved” motorized carriage is defined as a cable yarding system employing a motorized carriage with two fire extinguishers, each with at least a 5 BC rating, mounted securely on opposite sides of the carriage, an emergency motor cutoff, and an approved exhaust system.

The rule previously in place in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC 332-24-301) specifies that only gravity-operated systems using non-motorized carriages may operate during the restricted hours of a Level III partial shutdown.

DNR has updated documents and materials that help explain this change in the WAC. These include revisions to information contained in pamphlets, information cards, and the department’s web site at

[/RecreationEducation/Topics/FireInformation/Pages/IndustrialFirePrecautionLevelSystem.aspx](#).

In addition, DNR has developed [Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#) guidelines that spell out the day-to-day maintenance and operations procedures to be used with motorized carriages.

DNR hopes this rule change will lead to improved efficiency for companies using this type of equipment.